



FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT  
1 OCTOBER 2001 – 27 APRIL 2007

*More Effective Civil Society Advocacy of Human Rights*

BANGLADESH



**Funding provided by the  
United States Agency for International Development  
under Associate Award No. 388-A-00-01-00133-00**

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1 OCTOBER 2001 – 27 APRIL 2007**

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The AED Global Civil Society Strengthening Partnership  
AED Reference 1270-2926-04

Washington, DC  
May 21, 2007

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**BHRAP**  
**Final Performance Report**  
**1 October 2001 – 27 April 2007**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In October 2001, the Academy for Educational Development (AED), in cooperation with Management Systems International (MSI), began implementation of the Bangladesh Human Rights Advocacy Program (BHRAP) under the USAID Global Civil Society Strengthening Partnership Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 388-A-00-01-00133-00. The program supported USAID/Bangladesh's Intermediate Result 9.3: "More effective civil society advocacy of human rights." Originally a 5 year program, the end date was extended by seven months until April 27, 2007 to allow time to complete activities that were postponed due to a series of political crises throughout the country. The total final budget of the project was \$8,834,113.

BHRAP was designed to establish an environment that respects human rights and protects vulnerable groups, especially women and children, from human rights violations. Through public outreach, research and the provision of grants, training and technical assistance to civil society organizations and networks, BHRAP was able to protect in principle and in practice crucial rights of women, children and other vulnerable groups and fulfill its major program objectives to:

- strengthen the ability of local NGOs to advocate for human rights;
- increase the scale and scope of civil society advocacy; and
- increase public awareness of human rights issues.

This report details activities, results, and lessons learned of BHRAP. Part I provides a summary of activities conducted over the life of the program. It includes highlights of BHRAP's six core activities, a) the grants program, b) building coalitions and networks, c) capacity building, d) issue-based research, e) outreach, and f) a series of anti-corruption activities included in BHRAP in response to USAID Democracy and Governance priorities. Further details on these activities and supporting documentation were included in Semi Annual Reports 1-10 which covered the period from October 2001 – September 2006. As agreed, details on activities which took place during the last seven months, from October 2006 – April 2007, and supporting documentation are included in this report and Attachments 1 through 5.

Part II of this report details results obtained against performance indicators in the program Performance Monitoring Plan covering the period from October 2004 – April 2007. Part III highlights findings from an assessment of overall BHRAP lessons learned, achievements and major constraints. The assessment was carried out by an independent consultant, based on AED reports, AED grantee reports and workshops, and a series of interviews and focus group discussions with AED grantees, USAID and AED staff, project beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

## II. PROGRAM ACTIVITY SUMMARIES

BHRAP's achievements have been made through six core activities: a) the grants program, b) building coalitions and networks, c) capacity building, d) issue-based research, e) outreach and f) a series of initiatives designed in close collaboration with USAID/Bangladesh to combat corruption.

### a. Grants Program

AED awarded 18 sub-grants and one subcontract<sup>1</sup> valued at 257,246,298 BDT to 16 organizations for activities addressing four main human rights issues: violence against women, anti-trafficking, child rights and access to justice. Grant activities included human rights advocacy, civic education, community mobilization and service provision to protect survivors of human rights violations.

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<sup>1</sup> The subcontract to Uddipan is included with the Grants Program.

Awards were made to 14 NGOs and two International Public Organizations for an average of 29 months (ranging from 3 months to the UNDP to just over 4 years to BNWLA and Odikhar) and an average value of 1,271,761 BDT (ranging from as low as 941,325 BDT to UNDP to as high as 37,727,935 BDT to BLAST). NGO grant recipients included large national organizations as well as smaller regional and local organizations. To broaden the scope and scale of advocacy, BHRAP funded experienced human and women's rights organizations as well as service-oriented NGOs with little or no previous experience in rights-based programming.

AED/BHRAP called for proposals in June of 2002 through an APS released in local newspapers and on the AED website and received 359 concept papers in response. Five grants were awarded. In December 2002, a targeted re-release of the APS brought in an additional 123 concept papers. A total of 277 concept papers from both releases were deemed eligible for review. Nine subsequent grants were awarded from April 2003 through September 2004. In December 2004 AED/BHRAP released a targeted RFA to 15 members of the ANCVAW coalition for a grant to lead the secretariat and a campaign to criminalize domestic violence; nine proposals were reviewed and a sub-grant awarded to SAP-B in March 2005.

Three applicants, the International Organization of Migration (IOM), Save the Children Australia and South Asia Partnership-Bangladesh (SAP-B), each received two distinct grants for separate project activities based on exceptional past performance and innovative new proposals targeting priority issues.

Between January 2005 and March 2006, BHRAP awarded supplemental funds to seven organizations, Rights Jessore, BNWLA, BLAST, Odikhar, Padakhep, MSS and IOM, to carry out additional activities under their original grants. IOM received a supplement to provide bridge funding to ATSEC until additional funds could be secured to keep the network up and running. BNWLA, BLAST, Odikhar, Padakhep and MSS used the additional funds to keep critical activities running for the final year of BHRAP and solidify and sustain gains made during the life of their grants.

At the request of USAID in the summer of 2006, remaining grant funds were set aside to target the right to participate in free and fair elections to support critical national parliamentary elections scheduled for January 2007. Banchte Shekha, Rights Jessore and MSS all received additional funds to build on work carried out in their original grants to monitor and support full and violence free participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the election. Election activities were suspended in January 2007 when they risked, due to the political crisis in Bangladesh, appearing to be a partisan activity or the safety of grantees. National elections were suspended later that month and sub-grantees redirected remaining elections funding to cover activities under their original programs.

Table 1 below provides a chronological view of BHRAP grants activities.

TABLE 1

<b>GRANTS</b>		
<i>Nineteen grants worth <b>257,246,298 BDT</b> awarded to <b>16 organizations</b></i>		
<i>Total grant funds disbursed: <b>\$4,031,365.64</b></i>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
APS Released	June 2002	359 Concept papers received, 267 eligible for review
5 'Fast-track' awards: BNWLA, BLAST, Jesh, Odikhar, Padakhep	September 2002	Total grant value: 68,569,176 BDT
APS re-released	December 2002	123 concept papers received, 88 eligible for review, 10 NGOs invited to prepare full proposals
5 grants awarded: BPWDA, Save the Children Australia - CARD, Banchte Shekha, SAP-Coastal, MSS	April – September 2003	Total grant value: 58,522,541 BDT
1 grant awarded: IOM – Road March	February 2004	Total grant value: 5,224,758 BDT
3 grants awarded: BITA, UDDIPAN, ELCOP	April – September 2004	Total grant value: 57,789,207 BDT
RFA for ANCVAW released	December 2004	15 member organizations received the RFA, 9 proposals were submitted
3 grants awarded: UNDP, SCA-LCV, SAP-ANCVAW	October 2004 – March 2005	Total grant value: 24,073,442 BDT
Supplemental funds awarded: IOM – Road March	January 2005	Total supplement: 1,579,122 BDT
2 grants awarded: IOM-ATSEC, Rights Jessore	August 2005	Total grant value: 12,507,682 BDT
Supplemental funds awarded: BNWLA, BLAST, Odikhar, Padakhep, MSS	October 2005 – March 2006	Total supplement: 26,084,282 BDT
Supplements Elections Grants: Banchte Shekha, Rights Jessore, MSS	April – Sept 2006	Total supplement: 8,740,213 BDT

Details on each sub grant awarded are included in Attachment 1. Highlights of grantee achievements include:

**Increased NGO abilities, increased scope and scale of civil society advocacy, and increased public awareness of human rights:**

- *Communities' capacities to prevent violation of women and children's rights were strengthened.* Over 1000 community watchdog committees comprised of more than 15,000 citizens were formed to prevent human rights violations, raise awareness in the community, monitor local administration and law enforcement agencies and provide services to survivors and help victims of abuse seek justice. More than 5 million school, college and working children, adults, journalists, garment workers, community members and local officials attended dialogues, workshops, awareness raising sessions and other events including theatre programs, courtyard meetings, mass gatherings, empowerment sessions, clinics, village gatherings, and evening clinics to learn about their rights.

- *Civil society organizations advocated at the local and national levels to demand basic services, protect women and children from violence, reform policies, gain access to justice for all citizens and protect basic human rights.* Grantees conducted over 21,000 local advocacy events including rallies, meetings, dialogues, popular theatre and cultural events, media campaigns and a host of other activities. At the national level, grantees carried out approximately 70 advocacy programs including the collection of 140,000 signatures to criminalize domestic violence, seminars, dialogues with policy makers and other government officials, 2 national child parliaments, a national women's convention against domestic violence and a TV talk show series on human trafficking.
- *Imams led community prevention of human trafficking in 20 districts.* Imams delivered over 7,165 *Khutba* messages about the need to prevent trafficking to approximately 1,864,231 people at Friday *Juma* prayer services. Imams organized 509 village gatherings, courtyard meetings and bazaar meetings and 180 meetings at educational centers and student orientations to mobilize their communities to take action against trafficking.
- *Children learned about and advocated for their rights.* One boy and one girl from every district raised issues of concern and lobbied national policy makers on child health and education issues at two National Child Parliament sessions and 50,000 children learned about democracy and elections first hand through participation in 2000 Child Councils. Two hundred fifty seven children were trained as child journalists and reported on issues related to children and child rights in their communities and throughout Bangladesh.

#### **More effective protection of human rights:**

- *Legal protection provided for abused women.* The inclusion of women mediators and ongoing work with *salish* and ADR committees by a number of grantees brought about increased and more effective participation of women in community level justice mechanisms. More than two thousand six hundred women gained access to justice in cases involving violence against women, dowry, marriage, divorce, maintenance and separation that were settled by Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms (ADR), *salish* or mediation. Approximately five hundred cases that could not be resolved through mediation were referred to the Courts or legal aid services.
- *Trafficked women and children received social services and legal assistance, protecting them from future abuse.* More than nine hundred women and child survivors of trafficking received services: 282 were repatriated to Bangladesh from abroad, and 134 survivors from within Bangladesh were rescued and released. Three hundred seventy four survivors were reintegrated with their families or into society and 64 received legal and psychosocial counseling. Grantees (BNWLA) assisted prosecutors with 191 cases and judgment against traffickers was rendered in 53 cases in which 247 suspected traffickers were arrested and 93 convicted.
- *Child rights were safeguarded.* 36,107 births were registered; 99 children were removed from hazardous jobs; 34 children were allowed by their parents to give up their jobs and go to school; 75 marriages of underage girls were stopped; 35 children living on the street were reintegrated into their family homes or put into schools.

## **b. Building Coalitions and Networks**

AED/BHRAP believes that building coalitions and alliances within civil society and across sectors is an essential component of effective human rights advocacy. We pinpointed in our initial assessment of human rights activities the need to bring different organizations working on the same issues together to coordinate efforts and when necessary, join forces. Project activities were designed to catalyze, facilitate and promote existing and emerging coalitions, alliances and networks. Efforts included training in coalition building, supporting ongoing and emerging networks with grant funds (ATSEC, ANCVAW, SAP-B Coastal Network), promoting and facilitating alliances among like minded activists and organizations, and building linkages among grantees to strengthen their ties and ongoing activities and advocacy.

### **Action against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children (ATSEC) Bangladesh**

Formed in 1998, ATSEC Bangladesh played a key role in raising concern throughout Bangladesh on human trafficking and built the capacity of a vast network of NGOs and CBOs to address trafficking in their communities. ATSEC set up a secretariat, built up a staff, developed a resource center and trained NGOs and CBOs throughout Bangladesh. In late 2004, AED/BHRAP was approached by ATSEC for additional funding after a series of governance and management issues left the network without funding. So, based on a series of consultations with USAID, IOM, ATSEC board members and other key actors in the anti-trafficking community, AED/BHRAP provided funds to ATSEC through IOM under their ongoing Road March grant to address ATSEC administrative and governance problems and identify a mechanism for medium and long term funding.

IOM then presented a proposal to AED/BHRAP to support ATSEC for an additional year providing institutional support during what was in essence a transitional phase taking ATSEC from a network that functioned as a project implementing organization to a network that responded to members' needs and served as a unified voice against trafficking in the community and beyond and as a platform to advocate for national and regional policies to prevent trafficking, prosecute perpetrators and support survivors.

After a series of strategy meetings and consultations, ATSEC reviewed and revised its constitution, convened an Annual General Meeting (AGM), elected a new Executive Committee and developed and approved operational guidelines. At the AGM members voted to focus ATSEC's scope of work on four broad areas a) advocacy b) information /communication c) technical assistance and d) coordination, thus taking on the role as facilitator rather than implementer of project activities better left to members and concentrating on the development of its resource center and information gathering and dissemination. By November 2006, ATSEC had restructured its resource center, upgraded its website and member data base, and prepared and disseminated a Trafficking in Persons report to parallel the US government annual Trafficking in Persons report. After completing its BHRAP grant in November 2006, ATSEC accepted matching funds from the Daywalka Foundation for its resource center, accommodation and staff.

### **Action Network to Combat Violence Against Women (ANCVAW)**

In March 2003, AED/BHRAP organized a study tour to India focused on advocacy and campaigns on violence against women for representatives from 14 organizations and one independent human rights activist. During their visit to India the group shared ideas and perspectives on gender based violence, local and national legal instruments, and advocacy and prevention initiatives with Indian counterparts. After the study tour, participants decided to build a coalition focused on violence against women. AED/BHRAP facilitated meetings to help participants incorporate learning from the study tour into their programming and activities and develop a concrete plan for the coalition. The coalition decided on the occasion of International Women's Day 2004 to make a public declaration of their intent and launch the fourteen-member coalition as the Action Network to Combat Violence Against Women (ANCVAW).

In an effort to build on the commitment of individual members of the coalition and to move the ANCVAW forward, the coalition (with the support of AED/BHRAP and the leaders of member organizations) decided to launch a nationwide campaign against domestic violence led by ANCVAW. AED/BHRAP solicited proposals from each of the members' organizations to host the secretariat of ANCVAW and lead a campaign to build broad based consensus on domestic violence as a public and human rights issue and draft a law to criminalize domestic violence. In March 2005, AED/BHRAP awarded a grant to SAP-B and the campaign against domestic violence was launched in April 2005.

The grant to SAP-B was designed as a hands-on capacity building exercise in coalition building and advocacy campaigns as well as a program to raise awareness and promote effective policy on domestic violence. The coalition brought together traditional development organizations with significant field and service delivery experience with human and women's rights organizations with experience in legal aid and promotion of rights at a national level. Coordination among members and recognizing other organization's strengths and weaknesses and building technical capacity among members and national and field staff were immediate challenges for the coalition and the campaign.

AED/BHRAP worked closely with ANCVAW members and the secretariat over the course of the grant to provide targeted technical assistance and training. For example, training on coalition building to address ANCVAW's particular structure and challenges, advocacy and gender training for district action forum members and staff, and a mid-term assessment to review progress and challenges were provided to ANCVAW in addition to the training and other capacity building activities available to all BHRAP grantees.

By the completion of the project in February 2007, ANCVAW had made considerable progress raising the issue and level of understanding of domestic violence as a public and human rights issue at the district level, collected over 100,000 signatures in support of the criminalization of domestic violence and had brought together national legal organizations to develop a legal framework including guidelines for action against perpetrators in conjunction with support for survivors and their families that responded to the Law Commission's draft bill. Unfortunately, the Bangladesh government was in a state of flux at the end of the project which prohibited ANCVAW from presenting the legal framework to the government and lobbying for policy reform at that time. Members, however, continued to address the issue through their on going programming and were exploring new programs to address domestic violence. Members are also discussing a strategy to push forward as a network and continue their national advocacy campaign.

### **Developing Programmatic Alliances among Grantees**

AED/BHRAP regularly brought grantees together for training, to exchange ideas and to build organizational and individual ties. Grantee project coordinators, monitoring and evaluation specialists and financial managers met frequently in training courses focused on technical capacity building (see section c. below for details). These training courses, while explicitly focused on a technical training also served to build an informal network among mid-level NGO professionals providing a range of contacts and interaction among the next wave of NGO leaders. To reinforce this emerging network, AED/BHRAP held quarterly meetings to discuss issues of common interest, facilitated visits among grantees using a similar methodology or addressing common issues and encouraged collaboration among grantees. Examples of grantee collaboration include the joint development by BITA and ELCOP of human rights curriculum (BITA for rural college students and ELCOP for university students), the referral by BPWDA of victims of family violence in Comilla to the BLAST Comilla legal aid unit and the development of a joint legal aid program among BITA and BNWLA.

#### **c. Capacity Building:**

Grantee capacity building was, along with support through grants, the most important element of BHRAP. It was an ongoing process that began with the review of concept papers and proposals and continued throughout

the life of the project in formal workshops and training sessions, through technical assistance provided by international and national experts, and regular field and headquarter monitoring visits and consultations by AED/BHRAP staff and support for key grantee staff and rights defenders' participation in national, regional and international meetings and study tours.

### **Training: Grant Management**

Training to grantees was primarily focused on grant management and advocacy issues. Grant management training included monitoring and evaluation, financial management and gender training. Monitoring and evaluation training consisted of a series of workshops along with technical assistance related to collecting, analyzing, managing and reporting information and results provided by experts from MSI and BHRAP staff. Through these workshops, grantees focused on reporting for results, the development of tools for monitoring, and reporting, designing and implementing base line surveys and evaluations and the use of information in programming and advocacy.

AED/Washington and BHRAP provided regular training workshops on financial management for grantee financial staff and project coordinators. Three gender training workshops aimed at project coordinators, senior management and executive directors, and ANCVAW field representatives were held to provide grantees with a framework and practical tools to incorporate gender considerations into their day-to-day work and the design and implementation of their BHRAP funded project activities.

Table 2 below details Grant Management Training.

Table 2

<b><i>TRAINING: Grant Management</i></b>			
<b><i>Monitoring and Reporting for Results</i></b>			
<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
PMP Development	October 2002 – March 03	MSI	Work with new grantees to develop a performance monitoring plan (PMP)
PMP Development	October 2002 – March 2003	MSI	Refine grantee PMPs and coordinate data gathering and reporting
Reporting for Results	February 2004	MSI	Train grantees on project wide reporting tools and help them develop project specific monitoring and data collection tools
Monitoring as an action strategy	September 2004	MSI	Development of protocols and tools for the collection, management and dissemination of data
Information for Advocacy	October 2004	MSI	Follow up to Monitoring as an action Strategy workshop. Participants reported on tools developed in previous workshops and refined according to field / office testing of the tools.
Baseline Survey Techniques	October 2004	MSI	Introduction to baseline survey techniques and PMP development for those grantees who had not attended earlier workshops
Evaluation Workshop	September 2006	MSI	Tools, techniques and methodology for conducting final impact evaluations
Reporting for Results	4 meetings over the life of the project	AED/BHRAP Staff	Semi annual meetings with grantees to help them better and more efficiently report on indicators and document results

<b>TRAINING: Grant Management</b>			
<b>Financial Management</b>			
Financial Management	Seven workshops throughout the life of the project	AED/BHRAP Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure grantee compliance with USAID regulations and policies and help grantees document and report financial transactions in a timely and effective manner;</li> <li>• Provide grantee financial staff a forum to discuss common issues and challenges</li> </ul>
Financial Management	Q4, FY 2003	AED/Washington	To review AED and USAID cost share reporting and documentation policies and procedures
<b>Gender</b>			
Gender Justice (2)	November 2005 December 2005	Local Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To introduce the basic concepts of gender analysis and gender planning and reduce gender bias in project decision making and to help participants incorporate gender concepts and analysis in their understanding and planning related to violence against women</li> <li>• Separate workshops held for grantee staff and ANCVAW DAF members</li> </ul>
Gender Training for Sr. Management	August 2006	International Consultant	To help Executive Directors analyze and utilize gender consideration in planning, implementing and monitoring AED/BHRAP funded projects as well as throughout their organizations

### **Training: Advocacy**

AED/BHRAP noted early on in the program that grantee capacity for advocacy, especially in terms of advocacy for policy change, was lower than expected and would require a range of interventions to help grantees obtain the knowledge and skills needed to advocate effectively and over time against human rights abuses. An initial workshop on message development for violence against women revealed the complex and timely process entailed in developing clear, simple and effective messages for public awareness and behavior change. In response, an expert from AED/Washington provided social marketing training to grantees in the form of workshops and follow up technical assistance. AED also organized general advocacy training to help grantees understand concepts and processes of advocacy and apply it to their ongoing work. This was augmented by advocacy skills training and a coalition building workshop. Finally, AED/BHRAP organized a Training of Trainers workshop to provide select grantee staff who had participated in previous advocacy training the skills needed to train others from their headquarters, field offices and partner NGOs in effective advocacy. They also developed a training module, *Advocacy to Ensure Human Rights*, for courses aimed at building advocacy skills of human and women's rights and community activists throughout the country.

Table 3 below provides details of Advocacy Training provided over the life of BHRAP.

Table 3

<b>TRAINING: Advocacy</b>			
<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
Message Development: VAW: Adolescents' Perspective	September 2002	Bangladesh Center for Communications Problem (BCCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To seek adolescents' perceptions on violence against women and to formulate appropriate message concepts to address the issue</li> <li>24 adolescents participated</li> <li>Revealed need for time and process as well as capacity development for human rights message design and development.</li> </ul>
VAW –Advocacy and Campaigns	June 2003	Outside Consultant	Follow up workshop on application of tools and strategies from India Study Tour
Social Marketing	March 2004	AED/Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To think more strategically about target audiences, benefits and barriers to actions, key factors leading to behavior change</li> <li>Three workshops held for 2-3 member team from each grantee based on their primary target group</li> </ul>
Social Marketing II	January 2005	AED/Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce Imams and staff from UDDIPAN's COMPIAT project to principles and tools of social marketing</li> </ul>
Building Effective Coalitions (3)	May 2005	International consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess the opportunities and challenges coalitions provide for more effective advocacy for social change and provide participants with strategies and techniques to enhance their current advocacy programs.</li> <li>Separate workshops held for grantees, ANCVAW and ATSEC Board Members</li> </ul>
Advocacy Training (2)	June 2005	International consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reinforce understanding of advocacy concepts, the process of advocacy and key steps involved in implementation including choosing an audience, defining goals and objectives, working with the media and developing an implementation plan.</li> <li>Separate workshops held for grantee staff and ANCVAW DAF members</li> </ul>

<b>TRAINING: Advocacy</b>			
<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
Advocacy Training	February 2006	International Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide policy tools for implementation of advocacy initiatives focused on human rights issues and grounded in the Bangladeshi context.</li> <li>The workshop covered the full 'process of advocacy' and emphasis was placed on skills and tools for public policy advocacy particularly at the local level</li> </ul>
Advocacy Training of Trainers	August 2006	Local Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide key grantee staff who attended BHRAP advocacy training courses the skills needed to train their colleagues in headquarters and the field and partner NGOs in advocacy and develop training modules on advocacy for human rights.</li> </ul>
Advocacy Manual Development	December 2006	Local Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To follow up work begun in Advocacy ToT on training modules for human rights advocacy</li> </ul>

### **Training: Investigative Journalism**

As media can play such an important role in promoting policy reform and exposing human rights violations, AED/BHRAP conducted a multi-phased training program for journalists from leading newspapers and TV stations to encourage more and better investigative reporting on human rights. Bangladesh's press is generally characterized as free and dynamic, in spite of frequent threats, verbal and physical abuse and other forms of harassment faced by those journalists and news outlets who report on controversial issues such as human rights violations and corruption. This environment, along with financial and human resource constraints which prohibit editors from assigning reporters assignments that involve in-depth and time consuming investigation, significantly curtails investigative reporting. In addition, few reporters have the skills needed to carefully probe behind the scenes and uncover the motivations, circumstances and vested interests that may influence and direct the political, economic, and social events in a local community or on a national level. Not surprisingly, thorough investigative reporting in the Bangladesh press is scant and follow up rare.

The Bangladesh Investigative Reporting Training Program was designed based on an assessment and recommendations of two international experts/journalists. One of these consultants, Mr. Lewis Simons, is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who as Delhi Bureau Chief for Knight Ridder in the early 1970s covered Bangladesh's independence war. After interviews with editors, reporters, TV news directors and donors, the consultants designed a program that included in-country training to teach journalists skills and techniques of investigative reporting in a 5-day workshop combining theory and practical exercises and reporting facilitated by practicing journalists from Bangladesh and abroad. This in-country training would then be followed by a study tour in the region where select participants from the in-country training could work with seasoned reporters and learn first hand how renowned news outlets in the region manage and promote investigative journalism.

After the first in-country workshop held in Dhaka in January 2004, it was decided that another round of in-country training should be conducted before sending participants on a study tour. The second in-country

workshop was conducted in June of 2004. A total of 48 journalists from newspapers and TV stations participated in these two workshops. Based on the overall level of the groups' reporting skills and limited experience in investigative techniques, the team of facilitators recommended further in-country work before AED/BHRAP organizes a study tour abroad. AED/BHRAP then invited all 48 journalists who had participated in the in-country trainings to apply for a Journalism Fellowship Training Program during which they would have the opportunity to research and investigate a story on human rights under the guidance of one of two prominent senior editors who had also been a facilitator in the in-country training. Eleven journalists were selected to participate in the Journalism Fellowship Training Program and 8 completed the program. Each journalist prepared a story and budget proposal. Five of the 8 reports were printed in the reporter's paper or aired on their TV station and all 8 reports were compiled and printed in English and Bangla in the AED/BHRAP publication, *Investigative Journalism: Human Rights in Bangladesh*.

Selection for Phase IV of the Bangladesh Investigative Journalism Training Program, a study tour in New Delhi organized by the Forum of Environmental Journalists in India, was based on performance in the Journalism Fellowship Training Program. Five journalists, 2 print and 2 television reporters, were chosen by the facilitators and AED/BHRAP to participate in this week long program. The study tour provided participants the opportunity to meet senior investigative reporters and editors, visit Indian news rooms, discuss key human rights and development issues and the role of the media and file stories based on their experiences in India.

AED/BHRAP involved editors of the leading newspapers and news directors of participating television stations throughout the Bangladesh Investigative Journalism Training Program to engage them and encourage the publication of more investigative reporting on human rights. Meetings were set up with editors and news directors before soliciting nominations from editors for the in-country training. Follow up meetings were held after the in-country training and a lunch was arranged with editors, the USAID/Bangladesh Mission Director and Director of DG&E and international facilitators.

Table 4 below details the Bangladesh Investigative Journalism Training Program and related activities.

Table 4

<b><i>TRAINING: Investigative Journalism</i></b>			
<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
Journalism Phase I: In country training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 2004</li> <li>• June 2004</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Consultants plus 4 local trainers</li> <li>• International consultant plus 3 local trainers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal for full slate of journalism training: to increase the quality and quantity of investigative reporting on human rights.</li> <li>• In country workshop objective: to provide reporters with the tools and skills needed to effectively investigate and report on human rights issues</li> <li>• Design based on needs assessment conducted by international facilitators in a pre trip to Dhaka which included consultation with editors, journalists and donors.</li> <li>• Selection for 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop included meetings with 18 editors and TV news directors before official nomination of reporters by editors and a lunch with editors, international facilitators,</li> </ul>

<b><i>TRAINING: Investigative Journalism</i></b>			
<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
			USAID Mission Director & USAID DG & E staff held prior to the 2 <sup>nd</sup> training to encourage more space in papers and air time for investigative reports on human rights.
Investigative Reporting for Child Journalists	June 2004	International Consultant	To introduce Save the Children Australia's CARD project child journalists to independent consultant and Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Lewis Simons and give them an opportunity to discuss techniques and tools of investigative reporting
Journalism Phase III: Journalism Training Fellowship Program	September 2005	2 Local consultants / Bangladeshi editors	To provide select journalists who participated in one of the in-country investigative journalism training programs with an experience based learning opportunity to investigate and write a story on a human rights issue with mentoring and supervision by a BHRAP program facilitator
Journalism Phase IV: India Study Tour	March 2006	Forum of Environmental Journalists in India	To demonstrate best practices in Indian investigative reporting, particularly in regards to human rights issues through a mix of hands on and theoretical activities

### **Technical Assistance**

Direct technical assistance to grantees was an important component of AED/BHRAP capacity building. Training courses organized by AED/BHRAP were often followed up by technical assistance to help grantees implement learning and new skills. For example, social marketing training was followed up by a visit to 8 grantees to assess progress and revise social marketing plans developed in training. Advocacy assessments were conducted with 6 grantees to help them assess their advocacy interventions and help staff apply advocacy tools to their on-going work. After training on coalition building, the facilitator worked with the board members of both ANCVAW and ATSEC on governance issues.

Technical assistance also included strategic planning and mid-program assessments with international experts.

For example, a team of consultants from Pakistan and the US worked with UDDIPAN and Imams from the COMPIAT project to assess their project to-date and provide new strategies to address challenges involved in working with religious leaders to promote social development, especially in regards to gender. AED/W Sr. Program Officer and expert on networking and coalition building Dr. Darcy Ashman worked with ANCVAW mid-way through the life of their BHRAP grant to assess their effectiveness and help network members, the District Action Forums and secretariat carve out strategies for ongoing governance and programming.

AED/BHRAP also provided technical assistance to grantees and other key stakeholders on priority human rights issues. For example, AED/BHRAP supported the first meeting in Bangladesh between women lawyers and judges to discuss gender discrimination in the judiciary. The meeting was facilitated by the Executive Director of the International Women's Judges Association and organized by the Bangladesh Women's Judges Association and the Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association. AED/BHRAP also sponsored the visit of a women's rights activist from India to discuss with ANCVAW members and other women's rights leaders their campaign to promote legal remedies and policy reform to prevent domestic violence.

Table 5 below provides details of Technical Assistance.

Table 5

<b>TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>TA Provider</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
Advocacy Assessments	May 2004	AED/Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To gauge grantee capacity and help grantees to assess their advocacy interventions, look at full life cycle of advocacy and provide hands on application of advocacy tools such as SWOT analysis</li> <li>TA provided to 6 /12 grantees</li> <li>Revealed limited understanding and capacity to advocate – lack of skills and experience</li> </ul>
Social Marketing II	January 2005	AED/Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess and address challenges of implementation of social marketing plans developed by grantees in previous year's social marketing</li> <li>Provided follow up technical assistance to 8 grantees</li> </ul>
Coordination between the Professionals and Organizations for Ensuring Human Rights	June 2005	International Women's Judges Association, Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association (BNWLA), Bangladesh Women Judges Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To discuss women's rights and relevant legal issues and discrimination in the judiciary system</li> <li>Brought together for the first time women judges, lawyers and activists to discuss women's rights and discrimination in the judiciary system</li> <li>Participants included lawyers, judges, Law Commission officers, legislative drafters, a newspaper editor and Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Law and Justice</li> </ul>
ANCVAW Mid-term assessment	December 2005	AED/Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess ANCVAW's effectiveness and work with members, DAF, and the secretariat on future direction for governance and programming</li> </ul>
Imams Strategic Planning	March 2006	International Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To assess COMPIAT progress to-date and provide new strategies for unique challenges involved in working with Imams and social development especially regarding gender</li> </ul>
Domestic Violence Policy and Campaigns	August 2006	International Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide an opportunity for ANCVAW activists at the district level to learn first hand about Indian advocacy initiatives and campaign</li> </ul>

<b>TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>TA Provider</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
			techniques that preceded the codification and implementation of their domestic violence law.
Program design and implementation	Ongoing	BHRAP Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To help grantees incorporate innovative strategies and best practices related to advocacy and issue areas.</li> </ul>
Financial management and reporting	Ongoing	BHRAP Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To address grantee's issues related to USAID and AED financial management and reporting policies and procedures as they arise</li> </ul>

### **Participant Training and Study Tours**

Throughout the life of BHRAP, AED provided opportunities for grantees, human rights defenders and civil society leaders and organizations to learn about international best practices, exchange ideas with colleagues from the region and around the world and build alliances and networks with experts and like minded thinkers and practitioners. Individuals including a Transparency International staff member were given opportunities to attend specialized training courses, a team or small group of participants were sent to regional and international meetings including the 2002 Asia-Pacific TIP Seminar in Hawaii, the 2005 Forum of Women's Rights and Development in Thailand and the 2006 Biannual Conference of Transparency International in Guatemala.

AED/BHRAP also sponsored regional and international participant training through tailor made study tours to address priority issues. For example, in 2003 a study tour for 15 human and women's rights and NGO leaders was organized to Mumbai; in 2006 a study tour was organized for Imams and staff from UDDIPAN's COMPIAT program to attend the Asia Muslim Action Network International Interfaith Peace Forum and learn about and visit other Muslim led social development initiatives. A detailed report on the Imam Study Tour to Indonesia is included in Attachment 2.

Details on participant training and study tours can be found below in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6

<b>PARTICIPANT TRAINING</b>			
<i>27 participants attend 8 courses/ international conferences</i>			
<b>Training, Country</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Comments</b>
The Quest for Quality Forum An Exchange of East-West Experiences in Education, Philippines	May 2002	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sr. Assistant Chief, Ministry of Education</li> <li>Professor of Education, Institute of Education &amp; Research</li> <li>Sr. Education Officer, BRAC</li> </ol>	
Social Accountability Course, USA	June 2002	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program Specialist, Transparency International – Bangladesh</li> </ol>	Organized by World Learning

<b>PARTICIPANT TRAINING</b>			
<i>27 participants attend 8 courses/ international conferences</i>			
<b>Training, Country</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Disabled Peoples International World Assembly, Japan	October 2002	5. Assistant Director, Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS) 6. Development Officer, BPKS 7. Member, National Executive Council, BPKS 8. Sr. Assistant Coordinator, BPKS 9. Chairman, National Executive Council, BPKS 10. Center Coordinator, BPKS	
Human Rights Challenge of Globalization in Asia-Pacific-US TIP Seminar, Hawaii	November 2002	11. Executive Director, BNWLA 12. Executive Director, BITA 13. Freelance writer on Trafficking	
8 <sup>th</sup> Annual Asia Training and Study Session on Human Rights, Thailand	October 2004	14. Program Coordinator, SAP-B (M)	Organized by Asia Forum for Human Rights and Development
Forum on Women's Rights and Development, Thailand	October 2005	15. Project Coordinator, "Gender, Knowledge, Network and Human Rights Intervention in Bangladesh," BLAST 16. Program Officer, "Collective Advocacy to Criminalize Domestic Violence in Bangladesh," ANCVAW Secretariat, SAP 17. Program Coordinator of Banchte Shekha 18. Research Officer, "Broad Based Coalition Advocacy for Human Rights," SAP 19. Project Coordinator, "Promotion of Human Rights Advocacy through Human Rights Education and Conscientiousness," BITA	Organized by the Association for Women's Rights and Development International
An Independent Judiciary: Culture, Religion, Gender, Politics, Australia	May 2006	20. President of the Bangladesh Women's Judges Association and District Judge 21. Member of the Bangladesh Women's Judges Association and Senior Assistant Judge	Int'l Association of Women's Judges Biennial Conference
12 <sup>th</sup> International Anti-Corruption Conference, Guatemala	November 2006	22. President, Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry 23. Deputy Executive Director, BRAC 24. Divisional Head – Chittagong, Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association 25. Reporter, NTV	Transparency International Biannual Conference

<b>PARTICIPANT TRAINING</b>			
<i>27 participants attend 8 courses/ international conferences</i>			
<b>Training, Country</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Comments</b>
		26. Minister of Parliament, BNP 27. Committee of Concerned Citizens, Transparency International-Bangladesh	

Table 7

<b>STUDY TOURS</b>			
<i>30 participants attend 3 study tours</i>			
<b>Title, Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Participants and lead partner</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
India Study Tour: Violence Against Women Advocacy and Campaigns, Mumbai	March 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants: 15 human and women's rights and NGO leaders</li> <li>Partner and organizing group in Mumbai: Majlis</li> </ul>	To discuss issues, experiences and best practices regarding effective policy advocacy and laws pertaining to violence against women
India Study Tour: Investigative Journalism, Delhi	March 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants: 5 journalists selected from BHRAP's Investigative Journalism Fellowship Training Program</li> <li>Organized by: The Forum of Environmental Journalists in India</li> </ul>	To learn techniques of investigative reporting, share experiences with leading Indian journalists and publishing houses and learn about the challenges facing investigative reporters when dealing with sensitive and dangerous issues such as human rights
Indonesia Study Tour: Islam, Gender and Development, Jakarta, Cirebon	November 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants: 7 Imams from the COMPIAT project and 3 UDDIPAN staff members</li> <li>Organized by: Asian Muslim Action Network and International Center for Islam and Pluralism</li> </ul>	To learn about other Muslim led initiatives and NGOs promoting social development especially related to gender and peace.

#### **d. Issue-based Research**

AED/BHRAP commissioned a series of reports by international experts on two priority BHRAP human rights issues – domestic violence and human trafficking. The reports were intended to support grantee advocacy and provide data and evidence in areas where research is limited. Dr. Therese Blanchet, a renowned anthropologist specializing in Bangladeshi social problems related to women and children, and her team from Drishti Research Center developed a series of reports on cross border migration and human trafficking. The results of these reports were disseminated with a discussion led by the authors at grantee meetings and a public launching ceremony.

Dr. Sidney Schuler, the founder and director of AED's Empowerment of Women Research Project, and her

research team completed two reports providing in-depth data regarding the dynamics of violence against women in rural Bangladesh, with particular attention to the institution of marriage as a context for violence and other forms of gender-based inequity. Both reports were published in English and Bangla and widely circulated among women's rights organizations and NGOs working on women's empowerment.

Table 8 below provides details on each of the issue based research reports commissioned by AED/BHRAP.

Table 8

<b>ISSUE-BASED RESEARCH</b>			
<i>Six issue-based research reports commissioned: approximately 695 reports disseminated</i>			
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Date of release and dissemination</b>
Bangladeshi Girls Sold as Wives in North India	Dr. Therese Blanchet	Builds on previous USAID funded research by Dr. Blanchet on human trafficking focusing on the mechanisms and processes of Bangladeshi women and girls trafficked to Northern India and sold as wives.	The report was completed in late 2003 and disseminated to all grantees at a discussion meeting led by Dr. Blanchet in late 2004. In addition, reports were disseminated at BHRAP outreach events.
Doing Bidesh	Dr. Therese Blanchet	Refines and provides further depth to "Beyond Borders," previous USAID funded research by Dr. Blanchet, on the mechanisms and processes used by human traffickers.	The report was completed in late 2003 but was not released or disseminated as one report by request of USAID. Instead, Dr. Blanchet was asked to break the research up into smaller reports. The report was ultimately re-written into a shorter version of "Doing Bidesh" which at the request of USAID due to the controversial nature of the findings was not released and a report on HIV/AIDS.
Women, Migration and Health	Dr. Therese Blanchet	Focuses on the health consequences of women migrants and trafficking survivors based on long term research conducted by Dr. Blanchet of women migrants and trafficking survivors.	The report was completed in early 2004 and disseminated to all grantees at a discussion meeting led by Dr. Blanchet in late 2004. In addition, reports were disseminated at BHRAP outreach events.
Documenting the Undocumented: Female Migrant Workers from Bangladesh	Dr. Therese Blanchet and Dr. Abdur Razzque	Maps out the cross border labor migration of women from Bangladesh by destination, captures regular and irregular migration and measures its importance in absolute numbers as well as in relation to men through a nation wide survey.	The report was released and disseminated in October 2005 at a launching and discussion meeting. The report was also disseminated at BHRAP outreach events.

<b>ISSUE-BASED RESEARCH</b>			
<i>Six issue-based research reports commissioned: approximately 695 reports disseminated</i>			
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Date of release and dissemination</b>
Violence Against Women in Marriage in Bangladesh	Dr. Sidney Schuler, Dr. Farzana Islam, et al.	Provides in-depth data regarding the dynamics of violence against women in rural Bangladesh, with a focus on the role of the institution of marriage as a context for violence and other forms of gender-based inequity.	The report was completed in late 2005 and a summary version translated into Bangla. The report was disseminated at a launch ceremony organized in conjunction with the Bangladesh Women's Health Coalition in December 2005 and at BHRAP outreach events.
Women's Rights, Gender Based Violence and Recourse Seeking in Rural Bangladesh	Dr. Sidney Schuler, Dr. Farzana Islam, et al.	Follows up previous BHRAP funded research by Dr. Schuler and her research team with a focus on individual, family and community-level responses to domestic violence, why they tend to be ineffective and what could be done to change this.	The report was completed in mid 2006, translated into Bangla and disseminated at BHRAP outreach events. The report was also published in the US journal, <i>Violence Against Women</i> .

### e. Outreach

A variety of outreach activities to bring attention to priority human rights issues and inform the public, civil society, government authorities and donors about AED/BHRAP and our grantee activities were held throughout Bangladesh over the life of the project.

Major public events included an annual Human Rights Day Fair, initiated in 2004 and held in commemoration of International Human Rights Day, brought human rights activists and concerned citizens together to celebrate their commitment to human rights, target a key issue and engage the public in a range of activities including documentary films, booths, speeches and cultural events. At the four the US Embassy organized America Weeks, AED/BHRAP manned a booth displaying information on human rights issues and grantee activities to thwart human rights violations, quizzed participants on their human rights knowledge and organized presentations on project research by AED's Empowerment of Women Research Project. AED grantees presented their research, performed pot songs on human rights issues and staged a child parliament.

AED/BHRAP also sponsored dialogues and meetings to inform targeted audiences about issues, disseminate new research findings and promote debate, citizen action, donor initiatives and policy reform. These activities included closed off the record meetings among human rights lawyers and activists to develop a strategy for civil society on human rights violations by law enforcement agencies, an Inter-University Debate Competition on Human Rights, a National College Debate on Free and Fair Elections, a poster competition for youth to commemorate International Women's Day and a seminar for government representatives and civil society leaders on the UN Convention Against Corruption. Details of the BHRAP sponsored BDF National School Debate Championship 2006 are included in Attachment 3.

Table 9 below provides details on all outreach activities.

Table 9

<b>OUTREACH</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Target audience / participants</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
Developing Strategy Statements: VAW and Child Labor	August 2002	USAID personnel, DG partners, GOB representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop strategies on violence against women and child labor for future initiatives.</li> </ul>
America Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sylhet</li> <li>Rajshahi</li> <li>Khulna</li> <li>Chittagong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November 2003</li> <li>February 2004</li> <li>February 2005</li> <li>February 2006</li> </ul>	General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform people about BHRAP activities to protect human rights and provide information on burning human rights issues in Bangladesh</li> <li>BHRAP set up a booth providing information and materials as well as a human rights quiz</li> <li>BHRAP organized a presentation on Perceptions on Gender Based Violence, a Pot Song presentation on trafficking, a presentation of research findings by AED's Empowerment of Women Research Program on violence against women within marriage and a Child Parliament session</li> </ul>
Law Enforcement and Human Rights	March 2004	Human rights activists, lawyers and NGO leaders	To discuss how civil society could better engage and influence law enforcement on issues of illegal detention and arrest in response to recent mass arrests
Int'l Human Rights Day Fair, Dhaka	December 2004	General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring together AED/BHRAP grantees and others working to protect human rights to reach out and inform the public on critical human rights issues and commemorate International Human Rights Day</li> <li>Theme: Defense of Human Rights Begins at Home</li> </ul>
Report Launch: Violence Against Women in Marriage in Bangladesh	December 2004	Human and women's rights groups and NGOs working on violence against women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead authors Dr. Sidney Schuler of AED's Empowerment of Women Research Project and Dr. Farzana Islam of Jahangirnagar University presented their recently published report to approximately 50 people</li> <li>The English Daily <i>New Age</i> a full page</li> </ul>

<b>OUTREACH</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Target audience / participants</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
			on domestic violence including an interview with Dr. Schuler on the day following the launch
Report Launch: Documenting the Undocumented: Female Migrant Workers from Bangladesh	October 2005	Human and women's rights groups, NGOs, government officials and donors working on women and migration issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead authors Dr. Therese Blanchet and Dr. Abdur Razzque presented an overview of their groundbreaking study including a discussion of methodology, and recommendations with comments by experts on women and migration.</li> </ul>
Int'l Human Rights Day Fair	December 2005	General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring together AED/BHRAP grantees and others working to protect human rights to reach out and inform the public on critical human rights issues and commemorate International Human Rights Day</li> <li>Theme: Resist Corruption: It's a matter of Human Rights</li> </ul>
Inter University Human Rights Debate Championship	December 2005	Students and professors of 8 public universities and general public in Chittagong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise awareness among university students on human rights issues and the relationship between human rights and corruption</li> <li>The Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF) organized a series of 6 parliamentary debates among 8 public universities in the weeks preceding human rights day. The grand finale was held at the AED/BHRAP International Human Rights Day Fair in Chittagong</li> </ul>
National School Debate Championship '06	August – December 2006	College students and general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise awareness and understanding among secondary school students, their teachers and the public at large on the importance of free and fair elections and citizen participation and to engage youth in the democratic process</li> <li>The BDF organized 7 preliminary debate rounds in all 6 divisions and Dhaka Metropolitan area among 16 schools around the theme of free and fair elections. The grand finale took place in Dhaka among the winners of the preliminary rounds and was aired live on NTV after the airing of a documentary on the entire competition.</li> </ul>
International Women's Day 2007 Youth Poster Competition	March 2007	209 children from 45 institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness among youth about fundamental human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination and commemorate International Women's</li> </ul>

<b>OUTREACH</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Target audience / participants</b>	<b>Objectives / Notes</b>
			Day 2007 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 209 children aged 10-18 from 45 schools participated in a youth poster competition on “Women and Men Equality in Development” to commemorate International Women’s Day 2007. First, second and third place winners from each of three age groups received their prizes at the BHRAP Lessons Learned Workshop</li> <li>• A compilation of the best 15 posters from each of the three age groups was published and disseminated to Shishu Academies, schools and child and women’s rights organizations</li> </ul>
Seminar: UN Convention against Corruption	March 2007	Public sector, political parties, NGOs, academics	To inform the public about the recently ratified UN Convention Against Corruption will effect and enhance Bangladesh’s fight against corruption and address the roles and implications for civil society, the private sector and the government.

#### **f. Anti-Corruption**

Corruption in Bangladesh is widely recognized as pervasive at all levels and in virtually all sectors a citizen’s ability to claim and enjoy his or her human rights is gravely hampered. The areas where AED/BHRAP was most active were no exception -- human rights violations and corruption often going hand in hand. In response and in close collaboration with USAID/Bangladesh, AED/BHRAP organized a series of anti-corruption initiatives over the life of the program including participant training support for a Transparency International staff member to attend a course at World Learning in Vermont on social accountability, facilitating an off the record dialogue and report on how corruption hampers NGOs’ capacity to carry out their activities, a multi-phased assessment and recommendations by international experts of anti-corruption activities based on extensive interviews and meetings with key government, political party, private sector, and civil society leaders, and participation and leadership of an initiative by USAID partners to develop a Zone of Good Governance. In November of 2006, AED/BHRAP led a multi-sector delegation of Bangladeshis at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Anti-Corruption Conference held in Guatemala. A follow up meeting revealed that attendance at the meeting had spurred participants to take new initiatives and raise the issue of anti-corruption in their daily lives and work. Please see Attachment 4 for notes on the follow up meeting and details of participants’ application of learning from the Conference.

In February 2007, Bangladesh ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption. It was a move long awaited by many throughout Bangladesh even though understanding of the Convention and the implications for Bangladesh was limited. AED/BHRAP held a public seminar with participation by the newly appointed Chairman of the Anti Corruption Commission and all of his new Commissioners, the Executive Director of Transparency International – Bangladesh and key media, private sector and government representatives to discuss the content of the Convention and the role of civil society, government and the private sector in implementation. Please see Attachment 5 for detailed minutes from the seminar.

Table 10 below provides details on all AED/BHRAP anti-corruption initiatives.

Table 10

<b>ANTI-CORRUPTION</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
Social Accountability Course	June 2002	AED/BHRAP sponsored the participation of a Transparency International – Bangladesh staff person at World Learning in Vermont’s course on social accountability
Sub-grantee meeting on Anti-Corruption	September 2003	AED/BHRAP convened a meeting of grantees to provide an off the record and candid account of leading NGO’s experience with corruption and how it effects their operations and ability to implement donor funded activities. Results were used by USAID in determining its anti-corruption strategy and informed international expert teams’ assessments for the Mission.
Assessment of Anti-Corruption Initiatives and Recommendations for Donors and the Government of Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 2003</li> <li>• June 2004</li> </ul>	Mr. Zurab Nogaideli, then former Minister of Finance of the Republic of Georgia, traveled to Bangladesh to assess possible steps necessary for Bangladesh to launch an effective anti corruption commission or other initiatives. Mr. Nogaideli met with government officials, media, donors, and business and NGO leaders. The assessment came to an end when Mr. Nogaidli was unexpectedly and urgently called back to Georgia. A follow up consultation was then arranged with an international team of experts with a wide range of experience in confronting public corruption in their own countries and in delivering technical assistance to other countries on topics relevant to addressing public corruption in Bangladesh. The team consulted a cross-section of GOB officials, donors, civil society and the private sector. The team left behind a detailed report including their observations and conclusions regarding the nature of corruption in Bangladesh, the status of anti-corruption initiatives and specific recommendations for supplementing on-going activities and developing new activities to prevent corruption.
Zone of Good Governance	March 2005 – March 2006	AED/BHRAP was approached by a group of USAID partners (IRG, Winrock, ARD, Pathfinder, NRECA, Save the Children/USA) for help with a joint pilot initiative to mobilize stakeholders and citizens in a single district where all are working to demand their rights to transparent and proper service provision creating a local “Zone of Good Governance.” (ZOGG) The group led by AED and IRD developed a “Rights Resource Manual” detailing basic information and rights on 8 issues in the 6 technical sectors of participating partners. The full text was developed in

<b>ANTI-CORRUPTION</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
		English and color coded summary cards for each 'right' was developed in English and Bangla for easy use in the field.
12th International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC)	November 2006	AED/BHRAP sponsored the travel to and participation of 6 private sector, political party and civil society leaders in Transparency International's biannual anti-corruption conference held in Guatemala. Also included in the delegation were 1 NGO and 1 government official from the health sector with funding from a USAID health project.
12 <sup>th</sup> IACC Follow-Up and Action Planning	March 2007	AED/BHRAP organized and facilitated a session with the 8 USAID funded participants at the 12 <sup>th</sup> IACC in Guatemala to discuss application of learning and plans for additional anti-corruption initiatives and collaboration. The participants discussed how they are already incorporating best practices and new ideas from the Conference into their daily work including the development of a code of conduct for NGO clinics, adding anti corruption to the Annual General Meeting agenda and distributing a circular to all members of the Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and writing newspaper articles. The participants then discussed possible follow up by donors with the USAID Mission Director, members of the USAID DG & E team and representatives of the USAID Anti-Corruption Task Force.
Seminar: UN Convention Against Corruption	March 2007	AED/BHRAP organized a seminar for government officials, and leaders of business, academia, the media and civil society on the newly ratified UN Convention Against Corruption and the implications for Bangladesh. The seminar was opened with remarks by the newly appointed Chairman of the Anti Corruption Commission. The Executive Director of TI-B then made a presentation on the Convention and its implications for civil society, business and government. His presentation was followed by remarks from representatives of business, government and the media and an open and lively discussion with the audience.

### **III. PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN (PMP)**

In May 2004, AED conducted a mid-term review and strategy revision creating a need to review and adapt the program's Performance Monitoring Plan. MSI provided technical assistance to AED/BHRAP to develop a PMP that reflected actual program activities and the strategy as determined in the mid-term review. In addition, MSI worked with grantees to develop reporting mechanisms to facilitate BHRAP's aggregation of data across all grantee activities. The PMP and grantee reporting forms were submitted to USAID/Bangladesh for approval in November 2004. The PMP in Attachment 6 covers results obtained against performance indicators from October 2004 – April 2007.

### **IV. LESSONS LEARNED**

In early 2007, AED hired an independent consultant to assess the full slate of BHRAP activities, including grantee and AED led initiatives, identify lessons learned and best practices and make recommendations to

civil society and donors regarding future human rights and advocacy work. The following is a discussion of key lessons learned and findings in three main topics, Strengthening Advocacy to Empower Citizens, Engaging the State and Strengthening CSOs. The full report, “Synthesis of Lessons Learned: The AED/Bangladesh Human Rights Advocacy Program” can be found in Attachment 7.

#### **a. Strengthening Civil Society Advocacy to Empower Citizens**

- Creating and supporting a voice for naming and claiming rights

Early on in the project, AED, MSI and USAID expressed the concern that the advocacy practices of Bangladeshi NGOs appeared to be limited to awareness-raising activities. There was little or no use of more strategic and systemic approaches to bringing about change. The final assessment showed that awareness-raising is a vital first step in advocacy campaigns. Across the grantee projects, we found that when citizens have better information and awareness of their rights and entitlements, they increase their claims on ‘duty bearers’, whether it be the State, law enforcement authorities, service providers or even NGOs. The old saying that ‘knowledge is power’ is justified. This has been seen in the case of children, trafficked persons, women subject to domestic violence, people whose rights are violated.

Of course, awareness-raising and education are not in themselves enough to mobilize citizens to act, especially for disadvantaged or “weaker” sections of the population, such as the poor, women and children. These groups need structures and processes by which they can articulate their voices and their demands and make themselves heard. The range of grantee interventions -- from forming watchdog groups to providing legal aid and shelters, to network-building and advocacy campaigns – provided the support citizens needed to demand accountability and access their rights.

Combining educational events with opportunities to apply the knowledge in practice seems to be the most powerful approach, as exemplified by two grantee evaluations. Banchte Shekha found that although ADR committee members learned legal knowledge in workshops and trainings, they learned more through organizing arbitrations. Similarly, Save the Children Australia found that children were able to fully internalize the concept of their rights through the protection of the rights of other children (to education, protesting early marriage). Also children learned about democracy through carrying out elections for the Children’s Parliament.

- Creating and strengthening rights of community level defenders

A common lesson learned across the thematic areas is the importance of identifying, working with and strengthening community level right defenders. They are people and groups of the community who are approachable, committed and have their own credibility. They were recruited to join the Watchdog Groups and lead the District Action Forums run by ANCVAW. The community level defenders will remain in the community even after project ends. They fulfill an important function and can serve as intermediaries between the state and disadvantaged groups, spokespersons for the issues and monitors of human rights abuses.

- Evidence-based advocacy

Obtaining and incorporating evidence and data into advocacy planning is critical. Grantees collected evidence and while good using information to report results, understanding how and why that information needs to be incorporated into program design and implementation has yet to be fully internalized by many of the organizations.

- Networks and Coalitions

Networks and networking have a very important role to play in the strengthening of civil society. However they need to be approached strategically. There is no one formula for the development of a network. . There is pressure on the part of some partners and members to formalize networks into registered organizations without thoroughly examining the pros and cons of doing so. Formalization and effectiveness, however, are not the same.

There is also a growing awareness that networks need to ensure members are represented. This was expressed by many organizations. Regional and local organizations have gained capacity and strength and want more equitable distribution of responsibility and authority.

For human rights organizations to work together effectively and ensure that they fully master the ideas and concepts involved, they need to work together to discuss their own perceptions, experiences and other thinking in the area (e.g. international conventions on child rights or on trafficking) and from there evolve a common understanding and definition. ATSEC stated the development of a common definition on trafficking as one of their achievements. ANCVAW felt that the debates they had around the concept of domestic violence and the process of evolving a common definition was one of the most useful aspects of the ANCVAW work. Donors and network members need to understand the importance of this process and allow the necessary time for networks to build a platform for advocacy and reform based on mutual understanding and clear expectations.

#### **b. Engaging the State**

At the outset, BHRAP did not anticipate the extent to which engaging the State would become a common advocacy strategy implemented by the grantees. Yet the Government is a major player in the area of human rights. In order to bring about real change and sustain institutional reform it is important to engage with the State. This does not mean unquestioning collaboration but rather working with it as a partner, challenging, questioning and holding it to account for what it does or does not do. This can be done by the implementing partners as well as by the agencies providing technical and financial support to implementing agencies. AED and its partners employed a variety of strategies to engage the state.

*Influencing ‘duty bearers’ through regular monitoring:* A major strategy that most partners have evolved is to work closely with the local administration and local police. This made their work, whether on trafficking or access to justice, easier. This does not prevent them from protesting about abuses and procedural problems. The Odhikar experience of police station monitoring is a good example. At the beginning the police were very secretive and did not want to share information. Later when they realized that the results could be used to their benefit as well they were more willing to share information.

*Creation of new spaces for accountability:* A few partner organizations developed innovative and successful strategies and spaces so that citizens can hold duty bearers accountable. The national and regional dialogues arranged by SAP’s Broad Based Coalition for Human Rights and the Coastal Network created spaces where the citizens and government service agencies and policy makers were brought face to face and the latter had to answer to the former. Child parliamentarians discussed budget allocations with politicians and government leaders and could ask them to answer for their actions (or lack of actions) in National Child Parliament sessions.

*Joining government committees:* On several issues, partner NGOs found they could be effective by working within government structures. NGOs working on anti-trafficking as members of National Anti-Trafficking Coordination Committee were able to bring up their issues and problems to the national level and get official

attention. This helped them in their local level work as well. The Bangladesh Shishu Academy gave Save the Children Australia Shishu Parishads space on their premises, thereby recognizing and legitimizing these bodies. Organizations working on issues of violence against women and children were asked to help make Nari-o-Shishu Nirjaton Protirodh Committees functional and also to become members of these committees so that the organization can influence the Committees from within.

### **c. Strengthening Civil Society Organizations**

- The need for critical reflection

For organizations to learn from their experiences and their mistakes there is a need to make time for reflection, analysis, debate and discussion. “The creation of ‘space’ to try out approaches without fear of failure is crucial to the successful and responsive development of projects”. (CARD Project Evaluation). Reality, the context and the dimensions of the problems that are being dealt with keep changing. Yesterday’s formulas will not match today’s reality. Too often donors and civil society organizations both prioritize concerns about meeting deadlines and targets and following the work plan as laid out regardless of a change in context or circumstances on the ground.

- Ensuring CSO accountability and effectiveness

As usual, AED was very conscientious about providing the financial and other management training and follow-up to ensure that partner CSOs could manage their grants properly. However, we also found that larger governance issues were critical to successful advocacy of human rights by CSOs. Organizations promoting and advocating for human rights cannot apply certain standards and principles to one project and not another. In order to maintain organizational consistency there must be consistency between programs. This resulted in rights-based approaches being taken to other programs several partner organizations implemented.

Another aspect of consistency is whether an organization applies the same standards and principles to its own staff and internal processes that it is promoting for others e.g. transparency, accountability, good governance. This has long been an issue with regard to gender equality -- organizations undertaking programs to address gender equality must also ensure that their own organization promotes gender equality for its own management and staff. Therefore, to be credible and “walk the talk” organizations’ standards and practices should be consistent with human rights standards.

There are many traditional norms and practices that are unconsciously reproduced that are contradictory to the principles of basic human dignity and human rights. Therefore there is a need to continuously question ourselves about whether we are dealing with project beneficiaries in ways that enhance their dignity and autonomy or not. Another important principle that is part of a human rights framework and approach to development is that all persons must be given equal chances and equity and justice principles should lead us to ensure that we are not leaving persons, or groups of persons out of our endeavors or programs. There is a need to ensure that we are being inclusive in our approaches.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

AED was privileged to implement BHRAP from 2001-2007. With guidance and financial support from USAID/Bangladesh, the project gave us an opportunity to strengthen civil society advocacy of human rights in an environment where it was (and remains) sorely needed. On four main issues -- violence against women, access to justice, child rights and trafficking -- millions of Bangladeshi women, children and other disadvantaged groups became more aware of their rights. Thousands successfully sought support and justice. Participating Bangladeshi NGOs became more knowledgeable about these rights issues and improved their abilities to develop and implement more strategic advocacy activities by tailoring messages for desired audiences and organizing activities to engage citizens in processes that lead to change. Of course, much more remains to be done to secure the protection of fundamental human rights for all Bangladeshi citizens. To enhance the sustainability of its efforts, AED/BHRAP has assisted our CSO partners to share the project’s lessons learned with the Bangladeshi human rights community and to find new international partners by introducing them to other donors. We also will continue to disseminate the publications produced by the project among the broader international human rights, governance and development community.